Report No. 2

AMERICAN CITIZENS' REACTION
TO THE
War Relocation Work Corps
Circular of Information

June 1, 1942

Manzanar Citizens League
Committee

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On May 20, copies of the War Relocation Work Corps Circular of Information were distributed to every barrack room.

The circular, to our knowledge, was completely and thoroughly read by all citizens generally; it was the chief topic of discussion for several days.

THE REACTION:

Mr. M. S. Eisenhower's message addressed to "Americans of Japanese Ancestry" was well received because it indicated very definitely an understanding of the Citizen's position and recognized sacrifices already made as their patriotic contribution to the war effort.

The Circular's repeated emphasis upon the American loyalty of evacuees drew the following response:

> On page 9, the statement is quoted; "Enlistment in the War Relocation Work Corps is accepted as a clear indication of the enlistee's patriotism and loyalty to the United States."

This drew, generally speaking, a horse laugh.

Reason: Without exception, practically every citizen evacuue is firmly convinced that the alien Japanese and the American citizens of Japanese ancestry were removed to these "Center" because the Army and federal civilian authorities, recognizing the dangerous presence of a disloyal element, could devise no immediate feasible method to segregate the loyal from the disloyal. Now, to have an agency of the government suddenly come forward with a statement claiming that the simple procedure of signing it endow one with the mark of "patriotism and loyalty" was generally interpreted here as rank hypocrisy.

C O N V E R S E L Y, the statement was construed clearly as coercion to compel enlistment with absolutely no room for further thought or discussion.

W E R E C O M M E N D that the Authority deal with evacuees in utmost frankness and sincerity, recognizing them as predominantly loyal and patriotic Americans.

Quoting from the Fourth Interim Report of the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration, House of Representatives. (The Tolan Committee):
House Report 2124
Page 19 Under heading:
"Communit Administration and Self Government"

> "The regular law enforcement agencies of the Federal Government, with the co-operation of the Authority, should be responsible for ~~the~~ determining the loyalty or disloyalty of aliens and citizens alike. Citizenship rights should be fully respected and the American conesept of justice should prevail; namely that groups shall not be judged guilty in advance and the disloyal shall be determined and interned or tried by the established procedures of the Federal Government."

On the basis of the aggregate finding of Citizens League Committee members here over a period of the past two months, OUR CONCLUSION:

> We believe the Japanese and ~~American~~ Americans of Japanese ancestry can roughly be classified into three categories in-so-far as their American loyalty is concerned:

(1) Detrimental: Those whose ideology is essentially pro-Axis and pro-Japan, whose sympathies in the war are likewise with the enemy, and who admittedly are today thinking in terms of returning to Japan on the ~~first~~ available boat (in their post-war planning), with no intention of staying in America.

(2) Fence Sitters and Opportunists: Those who are confused and uncertain, not only about their present, but their future status as well; they are bewildered but receptive to fair treatment; they are, at the same time, easily influenced.

(3) Loyal Citizens: Those who believe in America, who are rooted here, who have definite stakes here, but more thatn that have spiritual convictions that their only real home is here; their intention is to stay permanently in America no matter what happens; and they are thinking along a long-range point of view in attempting to solve their problems.